ABSTRACT

An apparatus and method are described for mapping a plurality of

multimedia streams (e.g., received from a set of satellite transponders) across a

lesser plurality of decoders. In one embodiment, arbitration logic allocates the

5   multimedia streams to divide the decoding load equally among the group of

decoders (or at least as equally as possible). Allocation may occur statically,

when the system is initialized, or dynamically, as the streams are being

processed. In addition, in one embodiment, the arbitration logic monitors the

amount of multimedia data for each stream stored in a buffer and causes

10   streams to be serviced by the decoders which have relatively more stored

multimedia data.